

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for motivating a consumer to promptly indicate an interest in purchasing a product and/or service over a computer network, comprising the
5 steps of:

presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service to said consumer;

concurrently presenting to said consumer an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service
10 promptly, wherein said incentive decreases over a period of time.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive is initially set to a predetermined
15 maximum value.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive is presented via a Web page.

20 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive is presented via a window.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive is presented via a web banner.
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6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said product and/or service offered for sale changes each time said consumer is presented with a new offer.

30 7. The method according to claim 6, wherein said new offer is presented to said consumer when said consumer revisits or refreshes said web page.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the value of said incentive decreases incrementally over a predetermined period of time.

5 9. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive comprises at least one of a discount off a purchase price, a purchase price, an increase in quantity of said product and/or service, and a higher quality product and/or service.

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 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive comprises a product and/or service having a variable value, and wherein said maximum value comprises a product and/or service having a high value
15 decreasing to a product and/or service having a lower value.

 11. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

20 indicating an interest to purchase said product and/or service by said consumer at a point in time during said period of time; and

 providing said consumer the current value of said incentive corresponding to the point in time at
25 which said consumer indicated said interest.

 12. The method according to claim 1, wherein a consumer who frequently uses said incentive for purchasing products and/or services is accorded a more
30 favorable incentive than an consumer who infrequently uses said incentive to purchases goods and/or services.

13. The method according to claim 12, wherein said frequent consumer is accorded a higher maximum incentive.

5 14. The method according to claim 12, wherein said frequent consumer is accorded a higher minimum incentive.

10 15. The method according to claim 12, wherein said frequent consumer is accorded a longer time period for decreasing of said incentive from said maximum value down to said minimum value.

15 16. The method according to claim 1, wherein said offer is presented for a specific number of times during a predetermined time period.

20 17. The method according claim 16, wherein the presentation of said offer to a frequent consumer who frequently uses said method occurs more often.

25 18. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive corresponds to a profile of said consumer.

 19. The method according to claim 18, wherein said profile comprises information relating to said consumer.

30 20. The method according to claim 19, wherein said information relates to said consumer's location.

21. The method according to claim 19, wherein said information relates to said consumer's preference.

22. The method according to claim 19, wherein
5 said information relates to said consumers's historical behavior.

23. The method according to claim 1, wherein
said incentive gradually decreases from said maximum
10 value to a minimum value at a random rate during said predetermined period of time.

24. The method according to claim 1, wherein
said incentive gradually decreases from said maximum
15 value to a minimum value during said predetermined period of time, and wherein a first value of said incentive at a first point in said period of time may be less than or greater than a second value of said incentive at a second point in said period of time, said
20 second point coming immediately prior to or immediately after said first point in time.

25. The method according to claim 1, wherein the value of said incentive decreases incrementally over
25 a predetermined period of time.

26. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive comprises a discount.

27. The method according to claim 1, wherein
30 said incentive comprises a purchase price.

28. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive comprises a product and/or service having a variable value, and wherein said maximum value comprises a product and/or service having a high value
5 decreasing to a product and/or service having a lower value.

29. The method according to claim 1, wherein said incentive comprises a quantity of a product.

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30. Code executable on a computer, said code comprising:

code for presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service to a consumer;

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code for concurrently presenting to said consumer an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service promptly, wherein said incentive decreases over a period of time.

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31. The code executable on a computer according to claim 30, wherein said computer comprises a network server operable on a computer network.

32. The code executable on a computer
25 according to claim 30, said code further comprising:

code for initially setting said incentive to a predetermined maximum value.

33. Code executable on a computer, said code
30 comprising:

code for presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service to a consumer;

code for concurrently presenting an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service to said consumer promptly, wherein said incentive decreases over a period of time;

5 code for receiving an indication to purchase said product and/or service by said consumer at a point in time during said period of time; and

code for providing said consumer the current value of said incentive corresponding to the point in
10 time at which said consumer indicated said interest.

34. The code executable on a computer according to claim 33, wherein said computer comprises a network server operable on a computer network.

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35. The code executable on a computer according to claim 33, said code further comprising:
code for initially setting said incentive to a predetermined maximum value.

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36. A method for motivating a consumer to promptly indicate an interest in purchasing a product and/or service over a computer network comprising the steps of:

25 presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service to said consumer over said computer network;

concurrently presenting an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service to said consumer
30 promptly over said computer network, wherein said incentive is initially set to a predetermined maximum value and decreases over a period of time;

indicating an interest to purchase said product and/or service by said consumer at a point in time during said period of time; and

providing said consumer the current value of
5 said incentive corresponding to the point in time at which said consumer indicated said interest.

37. An apparatus for motivating a consumer to promptly indicate an interest in purchasing a product
10 and/or service over a computer network, said apparatus comprising:

means for presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service from a server computer over said computer network to a customer's computer;

15 means for concurrently presenting an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service promptly, wherein said incentive is initially set to a predetermined maximum value and decreases over a period of time;

20 means for indicating an interest to purchase said product and/or service by said consumer at a point in time during said period of time; and

means for providing said consumer the current value of said incentive corresponding to the point in
25 time at which said consumer indicated said interest.

38. A system for motivating a consumer to promptly indicate an interest in purchasing a product and/or service over a computer network, said consumer
30 operating a customer terminal operable to act as a client on a network, said system comprising:

a host controller, the host controller comprising a computer operable to act as a server on said computer network and to communicate with said customer terminal over said computer network; and
5 data storage accessible to said host controller, said data storage storing information relating to said products and/or services for offering for purchase to said consumer,

the host controller being operable:

10 for presenting an offer for sale of a product and/or service from said server over said computer network to said customer terminal;

15 for concurrently presenting an incentive for purchasing said product and/or service promptly from said server over said computer network to said customer terminal, wherein said incentive is initially set to a predetermined maximum value and decreases over
20 a period of time;

for receiving an indication of interest to purchase said product and/or service by said consumer from said customer terminal at a point in time during said period of time; and

25 for providing said consumer the current value of said incentive corresponding to the point in time at which said consumer indicated said interest.

30 39. A method for motivating a consumer to promptly indicate an interest in purchasing a product and/or service via a media, comprising the steps of:

presenting an offer for sale of a product
and/or service to a consumer via said media;

concurrently presenting an incentive for
purchasing said product and/or service to said consumer
5 promptly via said media, wherein said incentive is
initially set to a predetermined maximum value and
decreases over a period of time;

indicating an interest to purchase said
product and/or service by said consumer at a point in
10 time during said period of time; and

providing said consumer the current value of
said incentive corresponding to the point in time at
which said consumer indicated said interest.

15 40. The method according to claim 39, wherein
said media comprises television, radio, visual display,
motion picture, telephone, periodical, and/or computer
network.

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